

**Before the
Federal Communications Commission
Washington, D.C. 20554**

In the Matter of)	
)	CC Docket No. 99-200
Numbering Resource Optimization)	
)	
Petition of the West Virginia Public Service)	
Commission for Expedited Decision for)	
Authority to Implement Additional Number)	
Conservation Measures)	
)	
Petition of the Nebraska Public Service)	
Commission for Expedited Decision for)	
Authority to Implement Additional Number)	
Conservation Measures)	
)	
Petition of the Oklahoma Corporation)	
Commission for Expedited Decision for)	
Authority to Implement Additional Number)	
Conservation Measures)	
)	
Petition of the Michigan Public Service)	
Commission for Additional Delegated Authority)	
over Numbering Resource Conservation)	
Measures)	
)	
Petition of the Missouri Public Service)	
Commission for Additional Delegated Authority)	
over Number Conservation Measures)	

**IDAHO PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION
COMMENTS IN THE ORDER AND
FIFTH NOTICE OF PROPOSED RULEMAKING**

On February 24, 2006, the Federal Communications Commission ("Commission") released an Order and Fifth Further Notice of Proposed Rulemaking (NPRM) on Numbering Resource Optimization (NRO) measures. The Idaho Public Utilities Commission ("IPUC") submits these comments in response to the NPRM.

COMMENTS OF THE
IDAHO PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION

The IPUC applauds the proposed NRO measures as another example of the Commission's continuing partnership with States to ensure that numbering resources are used more efficiently. Delegating number pooling authority to the five States set forth in Order No. FCC 06-14 provides them with a valuable tool to extend the life of their numbering plan areas (NPA) and mitigates stranded numbering resources. The IPUC urges the Commission to extend the States' role in number conservation by delegating authority to all States to implement mandatory thousands-block number pooling at their discretion, and to allow the States to implement mandatory pooling and reporting when more than one carrier services a rate center.

The IPUC Supports the Delegation of Blanket Authority to the States to Implement Mandatory Thousands-Block Pooling

In its First Report and Order¹ issued in 2000, the FCC determined that thousands-block number pooling was essential to extending the life of the North American Numbering Plan (NANP). The Commission adopted thousands-block number pooling in the top 100 Metropolitan Statistical Areas (MSAs). The Commission agreed to continue to consider State petitions for delegated authority for pooling on a case-by-case basis, provided they met certain criteria.

The Commission commenced its national rollout of thousands-block number pooling on March 15, 2002, requiring all carriers operating within the 100 largest MSAs to participate in thousands-block number pooling in accordance with the national rollout schedule.² The Commission mandated that all carriers that were required to participate in pooling had to obtain their numbering resources from the national thousands-block number Pooling Administrator, and were no longer permitted to request larger quantities from the traditional provider, the North

¹ *Numbering Resource Optimization, Report and Order and Further Notice of Proposed Rulemaking*, 15 FCC Rcd 7574 (2000) ("First Report and Order").

² *Numbering Resource Optimization*, CC Docket No. 99-200, 17 FCC Rcd 7347 (2002) ("Pooling Rollout Order").

American Numbering Plan Administrator (NANPA). However, today this process has become inadequate given the current rules exempting particular competitors and/or providers such as paging and Internet service providers. It is the IPUC's experience that these service providers (through an ILEC or CLEC affiliate), in Idaho and other states, are obtaining blocks of NPAs and not complying with the mandatory thousand-block pooling as the Commission envisioned in its national rollout schedule.

Granting this delegated authority to the States will conserve critical administrative resources associated with the burdensome case-by-case approach the Commission currently utilizes. Pooling has proved to be the most effective way of administering the numbering resources in today's competitive marketplace. The IPUC concurs with the observations of several commenters that allowing States to implement mandatory thousands-block number pooling at their discretion will undoubtedly postpone the need for NPA relief. The IPUC maintains that extending mandatory thousands-block number pooling by delegating authority to States on a case-by-case basis is no longer efficient and recommends that the Commission grant blanket authority to all States.

The IPUC Supports Providing States with the Authority to Implement Mandatory Pooling and Reporting in Any Rate Center Served by More than One Carrier

Idaho, like many States which have certain regions with relatively low populations, could greatly benefit from having the authority to implement mandatory pooling in any rate center served by more than one carrier, including paging companies and Internet Service Providers (ISPs) or other companies with a need for numbering resources. If two carriers serve the same rate center, greater conservation would be achieved if each carrier is subject to pooling and to reporting on numbering resource utilization and forecast at the thousand-block level.

This requirement would help alleviate situations arising in States, including Idaho, wherein companies have separate subsidiaries offering paging, Internet access, or other services, and are obtaining full blocks of NPAs in many service areas throughout the state (including rural exchanges). Such activity results in a noticeable amount of stranded numbers. This creates an untenable situation where rate centers possess the potential to contaminate hundreds of thousands of numbers. In single NPA States, like Idaho, this is grave cause of concern and can result in a gross misallocation of resources.

For example, Homedale, Idaho has approximately 2,000 lines and has one rate center, but 30,000 numbers are currently allotted to carriers in Homedale. This is a clear imbalance between supply and demand that imprisons resources better used in other ways in the State. In addition, because some blocks are assigned to companies that currently are exempt from reporting their numbering resources, the IPUC's attempts to best align numbering resources are frustrated. By implementing mandatory pooling and reporting numbering utilization, Idaho would be able to realign these resources and forestall exhaust of its NPA.


Conclusion

The IPUC strongly supports the Commission's delegation of authority to all States to implement mandatory thousands-block pooling as discussed in the FNPRM, and agrees that this authority will permit the optimal use and availability of existing resources. The IPUC also encourages the Commission to review its rules regarding utilization and reporting requirements at the rate center. Specifically, the IPUC urges the Commission to address the lack of reporting requirement rules as they pertain to ISPs, paging carriers, wireless carriers, and any other carrier requiring numbers regardless of the technology used.

Delegating the contemplated authority will enable each state to implement mandatory pooling on a proactive basis ensuring a smooth transition, rather than reacting to these uncertainties after they occur. This proposal goes a step further in extending the life of the North American Numbering Plan and creating a better alignment of interests for telecommunication providers and consumers.

Respectfully submitted this 15th day of May 2006

FOR THE IDAHO PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION

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